

REMARKS:

In the outstanding Office Action, the Examiner rejected claims 1, 3-9 and 11-16. Claims 1, 8, 9, and 16 are amended herein, claims 2 and 10 remain cancelled and new claim 17 is added. No new matter is presented. Thus, claims 1, 3-9 and 11-17 are pending and under consideration. The rejections are traversed below.

REJECTION UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 102(b):

Claims 1, 3, 8, 9, 11 and 16 are being rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,671,428 (Muranaga).

Muranaga displays old and new versions of a processed document including comments related thereto to allow collaborating authors to manage processing of the document. In Muranaga, a document editor is provided to display an older version of a currently processed document or comments attached by other authors (see, col. 8, lines 4-11). Then, upon verification of a set of conditions for processing of a particular document, a group of authors process the document and are able to view the processed document (see, column 17, lines 25-31). That is, Muranaga is limited to retrieving a processed document and allowing a user to go through portions of the document to view different versions of the document or comments in relation thereto.

In contrast, the present invention displays searchable examination results of an examination of an electronic document conducted by multiple examiners to a requester and to the examiners. For example, a user may search through an examination document database using an XML tag defined. This eliminates the need to distribute paper copies of documents to be reviewed or examined by a various users, and review the paper copies of the document.

Independent claim 1 as amended recites, “a first browsing unit disposed at examiners’ side for displaying the examination document” and “a second browsing unit disposed at a requester’s side for displaying the examination results in a searchable examination result list”, thereby “allowing each examiner to search through the examination result list”.

Independent claims 8 and 9 as amended also recite, “displaying the examination results in a searchable examination result list at a requester’s side” and “displaying the examination result list at the examiners’ side for allowing each examiner to search through the examination result list”.

Further, independent claim 16 recites that the document examination method of the

present invention includes requesting examination of the examination document by the selected number of examiners, where “searchable examination results of the examination document is collected and displayed to both the requester and the selected number of examiners to enable searching through the examination results”.

Muranaga does not teach or suggest displaying “searchable” examination result(s) that allows examiner(s) to “search through the examination result”, as recited in each of the independent claims 1, 8, 9 and 16.

It is submitted that the independent claims 1, 8, 9 and 16 are patentable over Muranaga.

For at least the above-mentioned reasons, claims depending from independent claims 1, 8, 9 and 16 are patentably distinguishable over Muranaga. The dependent claims are also independently patentable. For example, as recited in claim 11, “a degree of importance of the examination document is set corresponding to the attribute information of examiners, and a permission for browsing is given in accordance with the degree of importance”. Muranaga does not teach or suggest these features recited in dependent claim 11.

Therefore, withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

REJECTION UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 103(a):

Claims 4-7 and 12-15 are being rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over various combinations of: Muranaga, IBM Technical Disclosure Bulletin (IBM Bulletin) U.S. Patent No. 6,725,426 (Pavlov).

Pavlov is limited to converting documents into XML files based on style rules (see, col. 1, line 42 through col. 2, lines 15), and the IBM Bulletin is directed to an electronic scheduling device that reminds reviewers of electronic folders regarding due dates and due time (see, page 2) based on specifications set by an originator of the folder (see, page 6).

The cited references, alone or in combination, do not teach or suggest a document examination apparatus and method providing “a searchable examination result[s]”, as recited in independent claims 1 and 9, upon which dependent claims 4-7 and 12-15 depend.

Dependent claims 4-7 and 12-15 also recite independently patentable. For example, claim 5 recites that the present invention “attaches an XML tag to every phrase in the collected examination result” and “sums up the examination results stored in the examination result database”, thereby “allowing the requester to browse the summary result”. The cited references

do not teach or suggest these features of claim 5.

Therefore, withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

NEW CLAIM:

New claim 17 is added to recite, "setting an electronic document to be examined by a selected number of examiners responsive to a request from a user" and "displaying a browseable result of the examination to allow browsing through the result of the examination including via a web browser". The cited references do not teach or suggest these features of new claim 17.

It is submitted that new claim 17 is patentably distinguishable over the cited references.

CONCLUSION:

There being no further outstanding objections or rejections, it is submitted that the application is in condition for allowance. An early action to that effect is courteously solicited.

If there are any formal matters remaining after this response, the Examiner is requested to telephone the undersigned to attend to these matters.

If there are any additional fees associated with filing of this Amendment, please charge the same to our Deposit Account No. 19-3935.

Respectfully submitted,

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